

CHAPTER XII.—Continued.

"Oh! I begin to catch the idea. Pack the treasure inside of them at night and let it lie in those innocent-looking copra bags until you come back, eh? By Jove, old chap, that beats my ghost-haunted fissure all hollow. We'll call that settled. I guess we've covered everything likely to come up before you get back. Now, what day shall I look for you?"

"This is Sunday, the 19th. I'll get away from here by Tuesday morning at the latest—the 21st. Two weeks from that would be May 5—and four days more? You can look for the steamer off Orote Saturday morning, May 8, about sunrise. And be mighty careful you don't let anyone suspect she's coming before the middle of July; not even Senorita Dorotea. By the way, what are you going to do about that young lady?"

"For instance?"

"Oh, shucks, Harry! don't beat about the bush. If that girl continues to help you as she has, and keeps her mouth shut, she's a trump. Are you going to sail away and leave her at the end of the world with merely a conventional promise to call if you ever happen to be in Spain when she's living there?"

"No, I'm not, old one. When the Countess of Devon change owners, it is possible that Senorita Dorotea may have an interest in her. My mind has been pretty well occupied with this speculation of ours for the past two weeks, but—well—How's Gracia?"

"You'll see for yourself when we go below for breakfast. She thinks a good deal of Senor Enriquez—tells me all the time that I don't half appreciate his friendship for me; so you're welcome to be as brotherly or cousinly as you please with her, especially as she's likely to sail with us on the Hong-Kong voyage."

"Really? Good! The girls ought to be very chummy together. But, I say, suppose anything should happen to me, or, through some unforeseen misfortune, I should lose the stuff? If you'd contracted to buy the ship, and support a wife in the bargain, you'd be in a good deal of a hole. After all, Dick, it's a frightful big gamble. And I don't know that you're justified in taking chances."

"Oh, bosh! I'd like to know what chances I've taken, or am likely to take, compared with yours. I've got \$20,000 in gold, right here on this table, to do with as I see fit; I could get married and skip with even that much, couldn't I? And I'm likely to sit up nights worrying about a partner who went under water for me in mid-ocean, bottled up in a diving suit, who tumbled off a submarine precipice and managed to get on top again, who's been rowing about with ghosts and skeletons, and who, bit an island 450 miles away, a proa, as you say, as if he'd lost to a cable; ain't I? Why, you've got more lives than a Kilkenny cat! I reckon I can stand the sea if you can."

"All, well! do our level best and hope everything'll come out all right, of particularly interested in Yap, I start back in an hour or two and set down to business."

"You won't. It was pretty galling to make the island as running before the wind; but that's another matter. You'd make a reach of 400 miles north before you could put about again, and you couldn't go 48 without sleep. Of course, you'd get the sun and figure about where you were; but it might take a week, standing off and on; and we can't afford either the risk or the time. As it happens, there are two Pouynipete banyards aboard who want to reach Gama this voyage; but under the circumstances I'd run you up there regardless of consequences. I reckon that the smooth over the irregularities of a trip, and when we own the Countess I can do as I please with her."

Here the conversation was drowned the whistle, as we signaled for a boat off Tonil bay; and by six bells the two were anchored opposite Rul, inside the reef. The cura Juan was almost paralyzed when I shook hands with him. How my presence on the steamer as possible, when he had last seen me rowing ashore at Apra, he simply could not understand; and when Diaz told him of my being picked up at sea, he crossed himself several times. That the natives sailed from one island to another, in the Carolines, he knew, but the trips were seldom long ones, and very rarely beyond sight of land.

CHAPTER XIII.

The next three days passed very pleasantly. The time had not yet arrived for explanations to either McPherson or Senorita Gracia; but we gave him 30 doubloons as an evidence of the progress we were making, and discussed various plans for the future with both, on the way back to Guajan. We were all very anxious that the ship—should have no opportunity to come aboard at Apra. So, as the two passengers had but little luggage, it was arranged that we should be dropped in the proa somewhere off Cocos island, the steamer then heading for Manila without further loss of time. This arrangement was carried out; and the people at Agana had no suspicion of the Countess's visit until after we landed. The Pouynipettes, having been occupied with their own affairs, were not positive as to just when or how I had come aboard; so the impression got about that, having been blown out to sea, I had been conveyed to a safer neighborhood because the two strangers had that way.

Inquiring for Sebastiano that evening, the gobernador told me he was suffering from a severe attack of gastric fever, which seemed likely to keep him in bed for some time; so I paid him a visit of condolence; it was the least I could do. Then I took advantage of his indisposition to get the treasure above water while safe from interruption.

First, I spent a couple of nights in removing the silver, already secured, from Tarofoto and stowing it away in the copra bags at Apra. Then I made regular trips every second day to the reef, returning with a long reach to the north-northwest which brought me into Apra bay about midnight, and working at the stowage until after three. This, with staying under water at the wreck, was pretty exhausting work, and but for the rest on the odd days I couldn't have kept it up. To have slept all day at the gobernador's house would have aroused comment very shortly, so I spent the time upon the water with Dorotea, napping in the bottom of the proa, while she fished and kept watch, as soon as we were well away from land.

Sebastiano's illness was the thickest streak of all my luck. I was beginning to feel careless because of our interrupted good fortune, when, returning from the last trip but one, a shadowy proa followed me into the bay. I held off toward the Agat road until two figures landed from her and walked into the copra shed; then I steered out to sea as fast as the wind would take me. Before rounding Punta Orote I thought of and discarded a dozen different plans. I had taken great pains to stow the treasure in the very center of the bags, so there was nothing but innocent copra for a thickness of several rows around and above it; and I knew if the strangers examined each bag as they went along they would scarcely reach the stuff before morning. It then occurred to me that Br'er Miguel's ghost wasn't earning its salt as guardian of the empty fissure at Tarofoto, and might be employed to advantage nearer home; so I sailed around after him as fast as possible. I had reached Apra a little early that night, so had time to return before daybreak; and, running ashore near the watering place, about three-quarters of a mile from the shed, I hurried toward it, holding my apparition before me.

The intruders had evidently investigated until they were tired out, and were sound asleep on top of the pile of bags. This was just the opportunity I wanted. Propping the figure up under the roof, about ten feet from them, I crawled out of sight on the opposite side and turned the ray from my lantern upon it. Then I dropped a piece



SHE FISHED AND KEPT WATCH.

of copra upon the stomach of the man nearest me. He was sleeping so soundly that I had to try a heavier piece, which startled him with a grunt of surprise and pain. In about three seconds his eye fell upon that faintly illuminated was figure, and, with a howl of terror that made my own nerves jump, he ran for his boat as if he were trying to break a record. His companion wasn't more than five seconds after him, and the two fought like madmen in their attempt to shove off and get away. To make the effect permanent, I grabbed my dummy, and, holding the lantern so that its rays would be reflected back upon it, glided swiftly after them. The horror of the thing had reduced their cries to inarticulate gasps, and they worked like demons to get out where the wind would fill their sail; so, as it was low tide, I waded after them, holding Br'er Miguel high enough to give him the appearance of walking upon the water.

When I finally waded back to shore, it was getting gray behind Tiniquio, so I lost no time in stowing my friend under several layers of copra bags, where he was likely to be undisturbed, but where I could get him in short order if his services should be required again. Then, hurrying back to my proa, I dumped the cargo of speels overboard in four feet of water, where it could easily be found whenever there should be an opportunity for secreting it.

This affair so thoroughly awakened me to the danger of delay that I removed all the remaining treasure from the wreck in one big load, next trip. Standing for the last time in the lazaretto of Nuestra Senora de Sevilla, four fathoms under the Pacific, I felt as though I were saying good-by to an old friend; for I shall probably never see her again. There was something wonderful in the way she had guarded those millions for me all the years since they first disappeared under water, and I speculated a little as to whether strict honesty wouldn't require my searching for heirs of the original owners. This didn't trouble me very long, however. The risks Halstead and I had undergone, and the way we had worked the problem out to a successful result, seemed to give us a better claim upon the money than anyone else—even our fat and scheming friend Sebastiano.

So the days slipped along through April into May, while I rested and learned what it was to have a beautiful woman's personality creep into the deepest corners of my heart. Then one morning there came a cloud which threatened disaster to all our hopes; and but for Dorotea's position and

ready wit this narrative would be merely one of fruitless adventure. A schooner came sailing into Apra—one of the island schooners which traded in coconuts, beche-de-mer, and other products—in search of water, poultry, and any cargo there might happen to be in the place. Noticing the bags of copra under the shed, her captain offered the harbor master a higher rate than that which obtained at Manila, and was told that, as the gobernador would undoubtedly be glad to sell at such a price, he might send ashore for it whenever he pleased. We were just coming in from a sail, and saw the schooner's men loading some of the bags into a jolly-boat as we skirted along outside of Apapa island. My face must have been absolutely colorless, for Dorotea laid her hand upon my arm and exclaimed:

"Madre de Dios, querido, what is it? que tiene V.?"

"No tengo nada; but look! They are taking away the copra in that schooner! The treasure! It is packed away in the bags. I never dreamed they would be disturbed until Halstead came for them. Oh, good Lord! how on earth can I stop them without giving the whole thing away?"

"Steer inside Apapa and land at the pier. I will stop it very quickly."

"But how? What can you say that will not arouse suspicion that there is something more valuable in the bags?"

"I cannot tell until I ask of the harbor master why he does permit it; then I will think of something. Does el Capitan Halstead know?"

"Of course he does, and expects to take them next trip."

"Then he would surely give more than other men for them?"

"Yes, yes. So will I. Only keep them where they are until he comes. I have it! Say that I spoke to you of a new chemical discovery which Halstead told me about—one which increases the value of copra, and which made him think of buying this lot on speculation. The treasure will need chemicals to get the corrosion off, anyway."

"Al, that will do. But you must not so alarmed appear, Enriquez. Do you light one of your cigars. Smoke as if it did make no difference to you. Leave the rest to me. Now—vivo—take the frown from your forehead. Come, there is el official—Senor Legaspe! Senor Legaspe, why do los hombres remove the copra?"

"El capitano gives two dollars more than the Manila rate, senorita. I knew el gobernador would accept such an offer, so I have given him permission to load."

"You have made a mistake, senor: the gobernador will be greatly displeased. The price of copra has risen very much, and the stranger capitano thinks we have not heard of it. Stop them instantly. I should regret to see you in trouble, Senor Legaspe."

"A thousand apologies, senorita; it shall be as you say. I knew nothing of the rise in values, and I but thought el gobernador would be pleased to sell. Hola, hombres! The copra is not for sale. Take those bags out of your boat and bring them back."

The sailors looked at one another and then grumblingly began to do as they were told. The schooner's captain must have been watching through his glass, for inside of five minutes he dropped another boat into the water and came ashore as fast as his men could row. Hailing the harbor-master in bad Spanish when he was within earshot, he asked what the devil was the matter, and why his men were taking the stuff out of the jolly-boat. Legaspe was smarting a little under the sharp trick he thought the captain had played upon him, and was very short in his reply that "the gobernador would not sell, and that was all there about it."

"Who says he won't?" shouted the captain. "I've had my glass on the shore for half an hour, and no one has spoken to you but this yellow-faced chap and the girl yonder. He ain't the gobernador, I'll take my oath; and as for the girl, I don't allow no damned native women to interfere in my business."

It took all the self-control I had to keep from knocking the man down. His cool appropriation of our millions was a serious enough offense, without the gratuitous insult to the girl I intended to marry. I stepped in front of the fellow and looked him over. Then I said:

"This lady, sir, is Senorita de Gama, only daughter of his excellency, Col. De Gama, gobernador of the Ladrones. I supposed from your colors that you were a German, but I'm ashamed to see that you came from my own country. You will doubtless see fit to apologize to the lady at once."

"Waal, perhaps I war a leetle hasty. I dunno who you mought be, stranger, but yer kin tell thur leddy I didn't mean no offense; wimmin's a good deal alike over here'n thur islands, an' I didn't judge her right, that's all. But about that thar coppera; I want a cargo of it, an' I'm willin' ter pay er far'r price. I'll give the gobernador four dollars more'n thur Manila rate, an' he kin pocket thur difference; but I don't cal'late ter leave Apra without it."

"I'm afraid you'll have to. I happen to know the stuff is worth a good deal more than the price you name; and, rather than let you have it, I'll buy it myself on speculation."

"Oh, ye will! What's ter purvent my layin' down my money here on thur sand an' tellin' my men ter put it aboard? I reckon you an' that dago ain't goin' ter stop me."

"That's where you make another mistake. Senor Legaspe sent for the gobernador an hour ago, and he'll be here with the officers of his staff very shortly. In the meantime, if you or your men lay a finger on those bags, I'll shoot you without a second's warning." (I was playing for millions, and I meant what I said.) "More than that, as you have grossly insulted the senorita, I'll kill you if you stay another five minutes on shore."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

DISRUPTED BY GOLF.

Peace of 250 Years Rudely Broken by the Modern Game in a Yankee Town.

Not a hundred miles from Boston is an ancient town, embowered in elms like most New England villages, with two or three long streets on which old and new houses are set in democratic nearness to the roadway, though they have ample space between them and broad acres of garden and arable and pasture behind.

Scattered on side roads, running into the country, are other dwellings, some of venerable age, others in the freshness of smart white paint, but all simple, unpretentious and homelike, mostly surrounded by farms, neat and prosperous, raising the modest, hardy crops of the New England climate.

Small hills bound the horizon, lakes and the glittering curves of a river course diversify the landscape and, though the face of the countryside is rather smiling than picturesque, a few groves of large pines have been spared to set off the cheerful brilliancy of open fields and young coppices. Best of all, while every prospect pleases the work and life of the men who have inhabited it have left traditions and associations which enhance the quiet beauty of the rural town, or which until a few years ago were allowed to do so.

Names famous in pioneer days, in colonial times and the revolutionary period are to be read on the moldering gravestones in the cemeteries and survive in their descendants who still dwell there. And days more lately lived survived in the memories of philosophers and romancers whose fame is worldwide, while their simple neighborly personalities are the beloved and honored property of this favored spot.

A very few years ago one still lived who, having touched the skirts of the immortals, passed on the virtue he had received to visiting pilgrims, whom he loved to guide to the sacred shrines hallowed by virtue, patriotism, wisdom and genius. It was also his delight to gather his townsmen together in the enjoyment of simple, fraternal pleasures and to keep warm the strains of kindred blood and the honest pride in an honest race, in the unpretentious manner of the olden time. Brought up in the common schools, there was no distinction between the moderately rich and the son of labor. Democracy in its purest form survived without affectation, and all agreed in respecting only those accidents of genius which bore the hallmark of no human coinage, and claimed for itself only a chance of service, the opportunity to deliver the message with which it was intrusted. Into this modern Eden, happy in its isolated, uncontaminated purity for 250 years, though the fruit of the tree of knowledge had been gathered and eaten there in ample feasts, the serpent had never entered.

It came at last. It had destroyed the Eden, the men and women hide themselves from each other, and are ashamed—if they are not clothed in golf suits—all is dissonance and discord. Sets have been formed, the golf club being the example, gay visitors from abroad have been drawn to join it, some of them have bought and built "villas" and have settled in the place.

The number of members is limited; some try to get in, some can't afford to do so, some who have not been asked loudly assert their disapproval of the innovation. The "golf set" attracts the younger people and houses are divided against themselves because the club members withhold themselves from the popular assemblies, the fairs, the lectures, the lawn parties, the church meetings of the old townpeople.

An exclusive dancing class in the winter draws sharp lines, a lively or two are set up, some men dress for dinner. In so small a place the growth of cliques means not indifference, but antagonisms in place of friendly interest and the pungent gossip which it creates. Merely wealthy folks come to spend the summer, attracted by a somewhat easier access to social recognition than in more definitely fashionable resorts. Circumstances do not permit the expansion of the old town; into one of these, an evolution which would at least have a definite value—it is only spoiled rusticity and half-baked gentility.

The shades of the departed worthies once so near and benignant have gone back glibbering and sighing to hades, while the maker of "society notes" does not think it worth while to come and dwell there. The poor old town has sold its soul and has not even got the mess of pottage!—Boston Globe.

Scurvy.

Prior to the present century scurvy was one of the most dreaded diseases on shipboard. Armies were decimated by it and navies rendered useless; sometimes half a ship's crew would be disabled by scurvy. Until the researches of physicians showed that it owed its origin to the lack of fresh vegetables, its ravages were frequent and widespread. In 1795 there was introduced into the British navy the admirable regulations of provisioning ships-of-war drawn up by Blane. Since then scurvy has almost disappeared. At the present time it is seen only in exceptional circumstances, such as have recently arisen in the Klondike. Even in the long, lonely voyages to the pole our means of furnishing the crews with vegetable food in various forms has prevented any outbreak of importance. —Philadelphia Medical Journal.

Spiders and the Diving Bell.

There is nothing new in the diving bell. Long before man thought he invented it the water spider knew all about it. The water spider crawls down a reed, dragging his diving bell with him, and anchors it under water on a level keel so that the air it contains keeps the water out.—N. Y. World.

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